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How 'Highly Reliable'?

CPYRGHT

✓ On the basis of unsubstantiated charges by a faceless someone it doesn't name, the Senate Foreign Expenditures Subcommittee headed by Alaska's aging Sen. Ernest Gruening says South Vietnamese Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky was fired by the CIA as an opium smuggler in 1963.

Ky and the American Embassy in Saigon say the charges are false.

Actually, the subcommittee doesn't quite have the courage to make a flat charge. It is "investigating" the matter; its information is "highly reliable."

It turns out the story was

leaked to a wire service reporter by the subcommittee's staff director, a Mr. Joseph Lippman, with the stipulation Ky's accuser be "protected."

We know nothing about the charges — or about Mr. Joseph Lippman and his unidentified source. But if his "highly reliable" source is prepared to make such charges against a leader of a nation whose men are fighting alongside our own he should be man enough to step forward and support them.

Otherwise, the subcommittee should repudiate the whole story and send its apologies to the Vietnamese.